

PIERCE COUNTY CHARTER

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The provisions of this Article allow the County the power to take any action not expressly forbidden by State Law, thus providing "home rule." It also maintains the name of Pierce, and Tacoma as the County seat.	
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A legislative branch of government is established that consists of a full-time, seven member County Council, nominated and elected by district on a partisan basis. This Article also grants the legislative branch specific powers, and establishes its organization and procedures. The procedures for adoption of ordinances and resolutions is also determined.	
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This Article provides for the establishment of an Executive Branch of County government, consisting of an elected Executive, Assessor-Treasurer, Auditor, and Sheriff, and the executive departments of Clerk of the Superior Court and Coroner, and grants them administrative powers.	
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ARTICLE 9 -- GENERAL PROVISIONSPage C-19

This Article provides for concerns not covered elsewhere including those governing purchasing, the granting of franchises, efficiency, public disclosure, veterans' policy, an ethics code and commission, nondiscrimination, information management, and eminent domain.

ARTICLE 10 -- TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONSPage C-22

Included in this Article are provisions for the transition between the Commissioner form of government and the new government under the Charter. These provisions include establishing initial Council districts, providing for elections and terms of office, the setting of initial salaries, continuation of ordinances, vested rights, County employees, current boards and commissions, and the County budget. Also established are the dates by which Charter mandated ordinances must be adopted by the Council.

(2) These procedures shall be in compliance with applicable general law or ordinance and shall affect all departments of the County, elective or appointed.

Section 9.65 -- Nondiscrimination

In the exercise of its powers or in the performance of its duties, the County shall ensure that no person is discriminated against because of race, creed, color, sex, age, handicap, or any other basis not reasonably related to the accomplishment of a legitimate governmental purpose, and after consideration of veterans' preference, shall take whatever affirmative action necessary to accomplish this purpose as defined in the State and Federal constitutions and applicable court interpretations.

Section 9.80 – Eminent Domain

Private property shall be taken by the County only for public use and no greater interest shall be taken than is necessary to accomplish the public use. "Public use" means only the actual possession, occupation, and enjoyment of a fee simple, easement, or other property interest by the general public or by the County; or the use of land for the creation or functioning of public utilities or common carriers such as railroads, utilities, or toll roads. The taking of private property by the County for economic development does not constitute public use; however, listing of uses that are not public shall not be construed to mean that the taking of property for other uses necessarily is for public use. For purposes of this Section, the taking of private property for economic development shall mean the taking of private property from one private party and the conveyance of that property within ten years to another private party for the purpose of increasing the County tax base, increasing the number of jobs in the County, or for general economic development. The taking of private property shall be found to be for economic development if a court determines that economic development, as defined in this Section, was a substantial factor in the County's decision to take the property.